Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 220408

13
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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

DRAFTED BY:NEA/IRN:MAGMICHAUD
APPROVED BY:NEA-RODGERPDAVIES
NEA/IRN-MRMORTON
S/S-O:RWRIGHT
NEA/INS-MRLEADER
---------- 063047
R 080444Z NOV 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

S E C R E T STATE 220408

EXDIS

FOLLOWING LONDON 12898 SENT STATE RPT TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T LONDON 12898

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MARR, UK
SUBJECT: INDIAN OCEAN TASK GROUP

REF: STATE 217508

1. WE CALLED ON THOMSON TODAY TO CARRY OUT INSTRUCTIONS IN REFTEL.

2. THE REPORT WHICH THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD RECEIVED FROM BRITISH EMBASSY ON GRAHAM'S NOVEMBER 4 CONVERSATION WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICER APPEARS TO JIBE WITH REFTEL. THOMSON SAID THAT ARRANGEMENTS FOR REFUELING OF TASK GROUP WERE COMPLETED; ONE REFUELING HAD ALREADY TAKEN PLACE AND ANOTHER WAS SCHEDULED FOR
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 220408

NOVEMBER 14 EAST OF SRI LANKA.

3. REGARDING USE OF DIEGO GARCIA BY P-3 AIRCRAFT, THOMSON SAID BRITISH CONCURRED. FCO UNDERSTOOD 2-3

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

AIRCRAFT WERE INVOLVED AND OPERATIONS WOULD BE FOR SHORT PERIOD, PERHAPS A WEEK.

4. WE THEN INFORMED THOMSON IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARA 6 REFTEL THAT IN VIEW OF POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES FOR HMG INVOLVED IN USN USE OF GAN AND MASIRAH WE DID NOT INTEND TO ASK FOR SUCH USE AT THIS TIME, ADDING THAT USG APPRECIATED HMG'S COOPERATION ON REFUELING AND USE OF DIEGO. THOMSON REMARKED THAT IT WAS DECIDEDLY HELPFUL TO KNOW THAT WE WERE SHELVING REQUESTS FOR USE OF GAN AND MASIRAH.

5. AT THIS POINT THOMSON RENEWED REQUESTS HE AND ARTHUR HAD MADE LAST WEEK FOR INFORMATION ON MISSION AND OPERATIONS OF TASK GROUP, POINTING OUT THAT BRITISH FELT IN VIEW OF RESPONSIVENESS THEY HAD SHOWN TO OUR REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT OF TASK GROUP'S OPERATIONS, IT WAS APPROPRIATE FOR THEM TO BE MORE FULLY INFORMED. WE CITED REMARKS WHICH DEPARTMENT OFFICER HAD MADE TO GRAHAM, AND SAID WE WOULD REPORT THOMSON'S REQUEST PROMPTLY.

6. THOMSON THEN HAD TO LEAVE AND JACKSON, HEAD, FCO'S DEFENCE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED CONVERSATION. HE NOTED THAT AS FAR AS USE OF DIEGO GARCIA IS CONCERNED THERE REMAINS QUESTION OF ENSURING THAT ARRANGEMENTS CONFORM TO PROCEDURES LAID DOWN BY 1966 BIOT AGREEMENT. BRITISH CONSIDER THAT US HAS NOW FORMALLY REQUESTED USE OF DIEGO GARCIA VIA UK EMBASSY/DEPARTMENT CONVERSATIONS OVER THE WEEKEND. FCO WILL ACCORDINGLY SEND INSTRUCTIONS TO UK EMBASSY TO ADVISE DEPARTMENT THAT FORMAL APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED PURSUANT TO BIOT AGREEMENT.

7. JACKSON THEN TOOK UP QUESTION OF CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE. GRAHAM HAD CORRECTLY OUTLINED BRITISH PRELIMINARY VIEWS ON LINE WITH THE PRESS IN EVENT

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REFUELING OPERATION OR USE OF DIEGO GARCIA SHOULD BECOME PUBLIC. IT WAS USEFUL, HE SAID, THAT MATTER HAD BEEN AIRED IN PRELIMINARY WAY WITH DEPARTMENT ON NOVEMBER 4. JACKSON INDICATED THAT FCO WISHED TO REFLECT FURTHER ON PRESS GUIDANCE AND WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH US SHORTLY. HE MADE CLEAR BRITISH WANT TO ENSURE MAXIMUM CONFIDENTIALITY OF REFUELING AND DIEGO OPERATIONS. HE ASSUMED USG AGREED WITH THIS. FINALLY JACKSON POINTED OUT THAT IF THESE OPERATIONS LEAKED, MINISTERS WOULD BE SUBJECTED TO CLOSE QUESTIONING IN PARLIAMENT; BRITISH THEREFORE WISH TO ENSURE THAT GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC USE IS CAREFULLY THOUGHT OUT.

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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8. DEPARTMENT PASS AS DESIRED.

ANNENBERG UNQUOTE RUSH

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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EO Systematic Review
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